

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

INSTRUCTIONS

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TO 1. SR/CA 2. Paul 3. Alan 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. RID/FI	ROOM NO. 5B 29	DATE <small>RECEIVED FORWARDED</small>		
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			FILE TITLE <i>74-124-293</i>	
TRACE REQUEST		ABSTRACT	X	FILE NUMBER (PRIMARY CODE) <i>74-124-293</i>
		INDEX		
DATE MICROFILMED <i>4 Jun 65</i>			DOCUMENT DATE <i>4 Jun 65</i>	DOCUMENT NUMBER <i>OCOA 09699</i>

108

DISPATCH**SECRET**

CLASSIFICATION

PROCESSING ACTION

TO	Chief, SR	MARKED FOR INDEXING
INFO.	Chief, WE	ONLY QUALIFIED DESK CAN JUDGE INDEXING
FROM	Chief of []	MICROFILM
SUBJECT	O REDWOOD AERODYNAMIC Burning of Kiev Public Library	<i>BCH</i>
ACTION REQUIRED - REFERENCES		

Ref: OCOW 5103, 15 January 1965 74-124-29/3

1. The [] passed to SMABOVE the comments on Soviet relations with Ukrainians in Canada, which Headquarters forwarded with Reference. In an attempt to stimulate further discussion and cooperation with SMABOVE on this topic, we also requested any additional information that SMABOVE might have on the burning of the Kiev Public Library and the anti-Soviet pamphlet which this act inspired. At SMABOVE's request the station also approved passing Headquarters comments to SMABET. The following paragraphs contain information from SMABOVE sources and comments from SMABET. We are also enclosing some items from the Ukrainian emigre press, which we have received from SMABOVE and which may be of interest to Headquarters.

2. On 31 March 1965 a reliable source advised that he was visiting Kiev, Ukrainian S.S.R., at the time of the fire. At approximately 11:00 a.m., 24 May 1964 on approaching the library, he saw yellow smoke and flames purring from the windows. Source was of the opinion that, due to the color of the smoke, some form of chemical was used to start the fire. He returned to the library at approximately twelve noon the following day and found firemen still at the scene, and the fire not, as yet, completely extinguished.

3. Source overheard several remarks, while at the scene, made by a number of university professors, to the effect that the fire was a national disaster as most of the books were irreplaceable, and it would set the Ukrainian culture back

Attachments: newspaper items

Distribution:

✓ Orig & 1 - C/SR w/att h/w
3 - C/WE w/o att

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CROSS REFERENCE TO	DISPATCH SYMBOL AND NUMBER OCOA 9699	DATE 4 June 1965
	SECRET	HQS FILE NUMBER

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

74-124-29/3

CONTINUATION OF DISPATCH	CLASSIFICATION SECRET	DISPATCH SYMBOL AND NUMBER OCOA 9699
<p>hundreds of years. One of the professors stated that sabotage was suspected.</p> <p>4. Source noted that, from the date of the fire until his departure on the 28 May 1964, there was no mention of the fire in either the local newspapers or the radio news broadcasts.</p> <p>5. During a visit to New York source learned of a strong movement, among university professors of Ukrainian origin in Canada and the United States, to organize a protest concerning the fire. Source had no knowledge of the circulation of a pamphlet in the Ukraine, charging the Soviet Government with deliberately destroying this collection of books.</p> <p>6. An untested source in a position to know has supplied us with a copy of a letter from the Supreme Ukrainian Liberation Council dated 1 March 1965 together with a copy of the complete text of the pamphlet as mentioned in paragraph 5 of your letter. Copies of this correspondence are attached for your information.</p> <p>7. SMABET suggests that, although its comments must necessarily be impressionistic since its direct experience is not enough to justify definite conclusions, another consideration may be that Canadian visitors to the Ukraine may be a further factor adding to an already generally dissatisfied rural population. The increasing numbers of these visitors may have had sufficient impact to cause the Soviet Government concern. Another possibility is that the C.P.S.U. may feel that Ukrainian-Canadian Communists would be more effective in Canada if they took a more active role as Canadians in Canadian affairs rather than isolating themselves psychologically in visionary speculation about their fatherland.</p> <p>8. Attached are copies of two translations, one an item from the 9 January 1965 issue of the Ukrainian language right-wing publication, the "Ukrainian Echo", and the second an item from the 9 December 1964 issue of the Ukrainian language, communist publication, the "Ukrainian Life", both dealing with the burning of this library.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">□ □</p>		

FORM 5-60 (40) 53a	USE PREVIOUS EDITION. SECRET	CLASSIFICATION	<input type="checkbox"/> CONTINUED	PAGE NO.
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Ukrainian National Liberation Council

SECRETARIATE-GENERAL FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MYKOLA LEBED
SECRETARY GENERAL
FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SUITE 148
675 WEST END AVENUE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10025

Release time: March 1, 1965

NEW YORK -- Secretariate-General for Foreign Affairs of the Supreme Ukrainian Liberation Council (UHVR) made public today the text of a clandestine pamphlet written in Ukraine.

The pamphlet had been distributed throughout the Ukrainian Republic and the rest of the Soviet Union. It was written on the occasion of the trial of a man convicted of setting fire to the largest library of Ukraine in Kiev last May.

It tell about the virtually secret trial in a small court in the city of Kiev, and about the testimonies of witnesses who had been carefully coached by the KGB (Soviet Security Police).

Authors of the unsigned pamphlet wrote that they could not put their names to it because "we live in a country where for a word of truth people are being criminally destroyed without trial."

They charge that "Russian chauvinism, like anti-Semitism, has been rehabilitated long ago in the colonial empire called the U. S. S. R.," and make reference to two other fires in the national libraries of Turkmenia and Uzbekistan.

Mention is also made in the pamphlet of the secret trial and execution a few years ago of a group of Kiev and Lviv lawyers who wanted to bring before the Supreme Soviet and the United Nations the question about colonial oppression in the Ukraine.

And the pamphlet also exposes the threats made by the Communist Party and police officials to students who planned to gather near the grave of Taras Shevchenko, Ukraine's greatest poet, as had been their annual custom. The ceremonies near the grave took place last May, two days before the fire at the library, inspite of the warnings.

Mykola Lebed, secretary-general for foreign affairs of UHVR, who made the text of the pamphlet public, said he also brought this matter to the attention of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

He said the pamphlet is being copied by hand and photographed and passed from one person to another in the Soviet Union.

-30-

(Complete text of the pamphlet is enclosed).

Attach:

OCA 9699

CS COPY

74-124-29/3

(Translation from Ukrainian)

ON OCCASION OF POHRUZHALSKY'S TRIAL

On May 24, 1964 there took place in Kiev, "capital" of the Ukraine, an event rarely duplicated in the history of world culture: The largest Ukrainian library, the Kiev Public Library of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukr. SSR was set on fire and burned.

How could the largest scientific library, located in the heart of a capital city burn down? As is well known, the fire-fighting techniques today are so efficient that large fires in cities are practically excluded, and even when they do occur, they are put out quickly. Things are so organized in libraries of the world today that not a single document can burn, let alone whole library possessions. World culture, during recent centuries knew of no case of the burning down of a national library, not in London, Paris, Stockholm, nor in Moscow (after 1812). And yet, the greatest Ukrainian library was burned down in 1964 — in the era of the cosmos, the atom, and cybernetics.

Moreover, the huge crowd of people that gathered, by the sound of the silent anxiety, at the place of the horrible crime, witnessed how sluggishly the work of fire fighting was proceeding. They could not get their rescue operations started at all for 2 hours because there was no water in the entire ward, the hydrants did not work. The fire was finally put out on the third day, only after the entire Ukrainian department of the Library was completely burned.

It so happened that only the Ukrainiania burned — including old prints, rare books, manuscripts, archives (for instance the archives of B. Hrinchenko, of "Kievskaya Staryna", of the Central Rada and others). A portion of those archives was not even yet catalogued nor categorized so that no one knows what there was and exactly what burned. They are lost forever to history. Also burned were special possessions of Ukrainiania through the year 1932 which had been collected on instructions of M. Skrypnyk after whose desposition they were classified as "secret" as was the entire Ukrainian history. The records burned also so that it is impossible to restore the index of books destroyed. Mention was made at the trial of 600,000 volumes. One can imagine how many books actually did burn.

Therefore, there was burned a part of Ukrainian history, a part of Ukrainian culture. Great spiritual treasures are lost forever. For thousands and millions of people, for generations of youth access was cut off to many spiritual sources, to books and documents, many of which have vanished for ever; and others, if their duplicates do exist someplace, are unavailable to the reader. At the present, even in Kiev itself there is no longer a place to work for the scholar, the aspirant, or the student, particularly if he is interested in the past of the Ukraine.

How could this unbelievable tragedy take place? Why? Under what circumstances? By whose hands and in what manner was it done? For what purpose?

The answers to all these questions were to be given at the trial of the individual who was caught redhandedly at the place of the crime — the library employee Pohruzhalsky. The trial took place in Kiev in late August of this year, in a small hall of the People's Court on Volodars-

But from the very beginning the trial took on a very strange character. Anything which in any way might suggest the political nature of the crime, of direction against Ukrainian culture, was consciously eluded. Instead, everyone, the procurator, the judge, the defendants, the defendant himself, and the witnesses, coached in advance, were in contest with each other to prove that the defendant was simply of bad character and it was not surprising that he set the library on fire out of vengeance against the director who had offended him. Such "important" questions as how many wives the defendant had, how he met them and why they were divorced, what flowers he brought them and how the property was settled when they parted were discussed in a drawn out and boring manner. The defense counsel dived deep into the psychology of the oft-times married man and explained how various injustices heaped on him by his co-workers led this tenderly organized character to the idea of burning the Ukrainian books. The defendant himself touchingly told that when he ignited the books he was not seeing the books but only the hated face of the director. In his concluding statement he even read a patriotic poem which started with the words: "Forgive me my motherland, forgive me my native country".... (Translator's comment: These lines are in Russian language)

Pohruzhalsky - is an official patriot. He wrote poems in which he praised Khrushchev and then he burned down the library... At the trial he felt like a hero, and it was obvious from all indications that he would not be punished severely. And indeed, he was sentenced to 10 years in prison. The "humane" Soviet law this time showed a compassion for the sentimental adventures of "this morally injured human being." A human being, we may add, who graduated from two higher educational institutions, and from the University of Marxism-Leninism (!), and who knew very well what he was doing and why he was doing it.

If course, if Pohruzhalsky were to be sentenced to death by shooting this would not have restored the library. However, a few logical questions arise.

Why was there not a single word mentioned about the magnesium bands and phosphorous cones? As is well known, it was not easy to put out the fire. This is explained by the fact that books were packed with magnesium strips and phosphorous cones. There was not a single word about this at the trial. And Pohruzhalsky explained willingly that he did it all with a box of matches.

How could such a doubtful character have worked in the library for ten years when the KGB takes interest even in the readers?

Why did no one raise the question about the lack of proper fire fighting equipment in the largest library of the Republic? At the same time, for instance, such contemporary libraries as the Saltykov-Shchedrin in Leningrad are so thoroughly equipped that any fire can be put out immediately with the help of an automatic fire-fighting system (indicators, shielding, etc.).

Why were such valuable archives-documents not kept in safes but instead in piles? Why did the court drag down to the level of just another adventure of the many times married man, Pohruzhalsky, the tragedy of the Ukrainian people known by now to the whole world?

Why did the judge make such strenuous efforts to prevent anyone from taking notes in the courtroom ("What are you writing there?", "Where do you work?", etc.)? /N.B. The two questions are written in Russian./

Finally, the main thing: If it was all the same to the incendiary what he was setting on fire, why did he set fire to the Ukrainian departments instead of, let us say, the department of Marxism-Leninism where he worked? Why, out of seven floors did only one burn down -- the one where Ukrainian books were stored? Why did the court slur over this fact with phrases about "homage to Russian and (!) Ukrainian literature?"

These and other questions (and there can be many of them) were not asked at the trial. How could they be asked when the KGB was in charge of the whole trial, which even

witnesses in advance, and obtained signed statements from the library employees to the effect that they would not bring up the irrelevant." (Translator's comment: the quotation is in Russian - "boltat zaneye").

However, there were some new disclosures made at the trial. For example, that for many years now Ukrainian books are being removed from libraries ~~en masse~~ and destroyed. Pohruzhalsky made this statement in his defense implying that I am not such a villain since books were being destroyed in an organized manner prior to the fire set by me. This was, so to speak, a judicial counter-attack by Pohruzhalsky. The judge found an answer to that also: the books were destroyed legally because there is a by-law concerning the liquidation of "ideologically and scientifically antiquitated books." The question is: why then was poor Pohruzhalsky tried? He merely applied the above mentioned formula! And didn't the offended incendiary have the same thing in mind when he recited in his closing poetic monologue /also in Russian - Tr./:

The enemies of culture are free
Into prison they put only me?

Besides, Pohruzhalsky's fate will be decided by his accomplices and adherents. We should consider the conclusions which ensue from this affair.

After having starved million of Ukrainians in 1933, after having murdered the finer representatives of our intelligentsia oppressing even the slightest effort to think, they have turned us into obedient slaves. Giving to the state all our strength and the fruits of our efforts, we haven't even the time to think: Who are we? Why are we living? Where are we being led?

We have been spat in the face many times. This year we have been spat at particularly impudently. They burned the largest Ukrainian library. They demolished the bridge between our past and present.

If this spit doesn't bring us to our senses and we submissively close our eyes, then what else are we but "slaves, foot-stools, the mud of Moscow"? (Translator's comment: The quotation is from Shevchenko).

How can the Ukrainian people be frightened? How can they be destroyed? Even Stalin was not strong enough to do that!

Can they be robbed? But each year they give away everything they have! Take away the language? That is being done every day. In cities its status has been on the level of a domestic servant and in the villages it is being mutilated like a collective farm woman's hands chapped from working by the beets.

Destroy the monuments of culture? They demolished the oldest Desiatynna Church, destroyed the Mykhaylivskyy and Uspenskyy cathedrals, and currently they are destroying ancient churches in the villages...

History feeds the immortal heart of the Ukraine. History gave birth to Shevchenko and thousands of national heroes and they can again be resurrected in every young boy and girl. That is why they have hidden the history of the Ukraine from us and have started to burn it out with a "hot iron." /Quotation is in Russian - Tr./

In school our children learn about the history of Russian tsars and their generals, the smotheres. Children are given false notions about their forefathers. But in the archives, like dynamite, there lie books, facts. Only jailors have access to them. However, even behind seven locks they bothered somebody.

Ukrainian books have been burned. A strange history will someday be written about these books passed through Russian and Austrian censorship. But even that which could

tolerated by white monarchistic chauvinism could not be borne by the red /chauvinism/. It /red chauvinism/ turned mad with fury that one day these books might break out into freedom. They survived Stalin's terror, they survived Hitler's occupation. Then they were taken away for waste paper as "ideologically antiquated." In one of seven floors of the library they found shelter on wooden shelves and awaited further "purging". They lie scattered about being torn, rotting in millions, wallow in bulk in monasteries. But the Russian black guard movement is intolerant, it does not want to wait, it is militant!

Ukrainians! Do you know what they have burned down? A part of your mind and soul has been burned. Not the one which Stalin's terror brought to bay, spat upon, drove into the heels, but the one which was to be resurrected in our children and grandchildren. They have burned the temple in which a soul becomes resurrected.

Russian great-power chauvinism, like anti-semitism, has been rehabilitated long ago in the colonial empire called the USSR. The attack is being deployed on a wide front not only against Ukraine, but also against Belorussia, the Baltic countries, the Transcaucasus, and Central Asia. Attacks come not only officially but also in the same manner as Pohruzhalsky and those who stand behind his shoulders. There were fires in the national libraries of Turkmenia (Ashkhabad) and of Uzbekistan (Samarkand). Is this not another link in the same black guard chain?

The chauvinism is everywhere — in leading positions and in secret decrees, but it is forbidden to mention it, as though it didn't exist at all. Instead, at every crossing they shout "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism." Chauvinism strangles you but you bow to its international uniform. It ridicules you, and you swear by the love for the "Great Russian People."

The chauvinism is powerful because it feels official support behind its back. In the eyes of our subjugators, those people who understand the great tragedy of the Ukraine, are state criminals. But we would not be afraid to place signatures under what we have written above if they would try us in an open public trial and punish us the way Pohruzhalsky was punished for the destruction of the Ukrainian academic library. However, along with you, we live in a country where for a word of truth people are being criminally destroyed without any trial.

Did they not conduct a wild retribution a few years ago against a group of Kiev and Lvov lawyers who wanted to bring before the Supreme Soviet and the United Nations the question about colonial oppression in the Ukraine and the ignoring of even the scanty Stalinist Constitution? A secret "trial", and execution by shooting — this is the response to any efforts to raise a voice for the rights of a subjugated nation. And to prevent descendants from learning about this, all documents regarding the investigation and the court proceedings were destroyed...

And at a time when there are acts being performed which might be envied even by the mediaeval inquisitors, there is the classic claim from all tribunes that there are no political prisoners in our country and that "the dictatorship of proletariat" grew over into an all-people democratic state. If a gag in your mouth and secret destruction of political adversaries is democracy, then what is fascism?

It is quite indicative that the library was set on fire on the 24th of May, at the time of the Shevchenko celebrations. It gives a particularly ill-omened feature to the event. Perhaps not everyone is aware of how much has been done in 1963-64 to exclude everything Shevchenkovian from these celebrations. Outwardly Taras /Shevchenko/ is seemingly glorified. Because what else is to be done with him? In reality there is a great war going on against Shevchenko. His greatest political poems (Osiya Hlava XIX, I Mertvym i zhivym, Rozryta Mohyla and others) are being suppressed. There is a special instruction that all Shevchenko concerts and evenings be closely surveilled to be sure they are conducted on a "gopak" level, because otherwise, God forbid, the sincere Bard's word might influence someone, awaken in someone a thought about the Ukraine, about "our, yet not our own soil." And how much material

and poems and articles about Shevchenko in which the watchdogs saw "a hint" about the present status of the Ukraine, were barred from magazines and newspapers by the censors!

Shevchenko was feared by the tsar. Our party-tsarists also fear him, why else did they bring in a mass of the soldiers and police, plus plainclothes KGBists to the hill in Kaniv on the anniversary date. And were there any people there? People were admitted to see Shevchenko only by permit...

But the climax of all this was reached by the events that took place on the 22nd of May in Kiev. On that day, the anniversary of the transfer of Shevchenko's remains from St. Petersburg for burial in Kaniv, is traditionally observed. People usually gather around the Shevchenko monument and sing songs. That is how it was in recent years. This year, however, fulfilling the general plan of work "on Shevchenko", the authorities decided to prevent this. On the eve, a group of young people, considered to be initiators of this affair, were called to the CC of the LKMSU /Young Communist League/ and told that this was not permitted. Why? "Because such manifestations mean an offence to the great Russian people." That is literally how it was said: "an offence to the great Russian people."

Absurd, but consistent. Later deans and party-organizers ran around in auditoriums and warned students that anyone seen near the Shevchenko monument on May 22 will be automatically expelled from the higher educational institution. Unbelievable? Ask the students of universities, the Pedagogical Institute, the Medical Institute, ask employees of the Institute of Literature, Folklore and Ethnography, of the Derzhlitvydav(State Publishing House of Literature) and of other publishing houses. They all received telephone calls even from secretaries of the Central Committee of Komsomol of the Ukraine and were severely warned by them.

Despite all that, on the evening of May 22, a huge crowd of young people gathered around the monument. They were filmed and now are being "dragged around." Some were fired from their jobs. Others were to be fired but instructions from Moscow were received "not to inflate the incident."

That is how they fear Shevchenko. And that is how they fight against him. The war with Shevchenko is only a part of the war against Ukrainian culture and the Ukrainian people. The burning down of Ukrainiana in the public library is also a part of this war... Taras Shevchenko called us to "Learn, my brothers, think, and read."

Think...

We know that the nation is immortal, it cannot be strangled, its spirit cannot be burned. Provided, of course, a spirit of struggle does exist. When it lacks a fighting spirit — it dies. Let us not console ourselves with eternal truth about immortality of a nation — its life depends on our readiness to stand up for ourselves!

/Unsigned/

/The original document is hand printed and measures 6 1/2" x 4 3/4" unfolded or ca. 3 1/4" x 4 3/4" when folded).

UKRAINIAN LIFE

Issue 9-12-64

PAGE 2:

"SENTENCED A CRIMINAL".

On May 24, in the premises of the State public library of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR, a fire broke out.

Soviet Ukrainian press, at that time, informed that the entire hand-written collection and the card-index were not damaged and the main book collection was only slightly damaged and can be replaced from duplicate stock.

At that time a government commission was formed which investigated the causes of the fire and planned measures to rebuild the library.

News from Kiev inform that the library is being rebuilt at a fast pace - the reference library is already open to the public.

Recently the arsonist was put before a public trial which sentenced him to 10 years in prison.

(Ukrainian Echo 9-1-65)

SENTENCED AN ANONYMOUS CRIMINAL

A Communist-Russophil mercenary newspaper which is printed in Toronto in the Ukrainian language and is called the "Ukrainian Life", printed in its Dec. 9 issue a news item, in which it was stated that a criminal, who set fire to the library of the Academie of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR, was sentenced. The fire broke out in Kiev on May 24, 1964. The Russian press stated that the arsonist was mentally ill.

Now the "Ukrainian Life", in its first article on the subject since the fire, printed the following: "The Ukrainian Soviet press informed at that time that the entire hand-written collection and the card index were not damaged and the main book collection was only damaged slightly and can be replaced from duplicate stock.

At that time a government (?) commission was formed which investigated the causes of the fire and planned measures to rebuild the library. News from Kiev inform that the library is being rebuilt in fast tempo. The reference library is already open to the public".

At the end of the news item, the following is stated: "Recently (the date is omitted in order not to reveal yet another in the line of Russian lies - note by "UE") the arsonist was put to a public trial which sentenced him to 10 years in prison"

That is all there is to it. They wrote about a public trial but did not disclose neither the locality where it was held nor the date of the trial and most important of all, the defendant was not named. It seems that the defendant was an anonymous person and in addition to that a mentally ill person. What then can be said about such a trial and a sentence which was passed on a mentally ill person.
